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## V Corps Field Artillery Batteries join Polish Counterparts *for good, clean decontamination training*

By Spc. Kris Steward  
V Corps Public Affairs Office

**GLEBOKIE, Poland** — The firing batteries of V Corps' 1st Battalion, 27th Field Artillery, 41st Field Artillery Brigade, literally stripped down to their bare naked assets as they trained with Polish troops here in a thorough decontamination of vehicles, equipment and personnel.

During a three-day rotation, A, B, and C Batteries divided into platoons, lined up their vehicles — ranging from Humvees to Heavy Expanded Mobility Tactical Trucks — and drove through a wash system equipped with hoses and a sprinkler device that sprays a mixture of water and decontamination solution over and underneath the vehicles.

Larger vehicles such as the tracked Multiple Launch Rocket System launchers were taken to a separate wash point, where they were sanitized by a Polish SO-3 jet engine gushing 48 gallons of water

per minute at temperatures as hot as 1,112 degrees Fahrenheit.

"I never would've thought the Polish Army had this equipment," said Capt. Matthew Mastick, commander of A Battery. "It's amazing. Very impressive."

The soldiers, wearing protective masks and dressed in full Mission-Oriented Protection Posture clothing, made their way to a field bath set up by soldiers of the Polish Army's 1st Nuclear Biological Chemical Battalion, 4th Brodnicki NBC Regiment. There they removed their gear, equipment and uniforms — all the way down to their birthday suits — to shower inside a chemical cleansing tent, dubbed the "skin-decon."

The field bath consists of several different stations. As each soldier approached in his MOPP gear, the first stop was a soak in an outdoor shower. The next step had the troop take off each piece of his equipment, such as protective gloves, load-bearing equipment and Kevlar helmet, and place it in its own separate bin. Personal items such as watches were zipped in plastic bags. The next step was a visit to the cleansing tent, where each soldier undressed and scrubbed with soap and lukewarm water.

In the meantime, Polish soldiers gathered each soldier's equipment, bagged it and sanitized it. By the time the soldier had towed off and put on a new battledress uniform, his equipment was waiting for him on the other side of the tent.

"The hardest part of the decon was finding your gear afterwards," said Sgt. Thomas Greer, a Multiple Launch Rocket System gunner for A Battery. "Some of us had our names on our tops, but not on our bottoms [of the MOPP suit]. Some things were just hard to find."

Spc. Forease Collins, A Battery's NBC sergeant, said he helped prepare the soldiers for the exercise by retraining them on individual and buddy MOPP gear exchange and how to react to biological and chemical attacks.

"During wartime, we may have to go through a thorough decon like this," said Collins. "This is a great opportunity to hone our NBC skills."

Collins said he participated in a similar decontamination exercise with the 82nd Chemical Company in 1998 at Fort McClellan, Ala., but instead of simulating an attack, the company trained with live nerve agent.

"It was a little scarier, but we went through a lot of tests with our masks beforehand," said Collins. "We wanted to make sure we had a really good seal."

Chaplain (Capt.) Douglas Gibson, for the 1/27th, said he also partici-

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Photo by Spc. Kris Steward

**Spc. Michael Burton, fire direction specialist for V Corps' B Battery, 1st Battalion 27th Field Artillery, decontaminates his chemical protective Mission-Oriented Protective Posture gear in an outdoor shower.**

# 7th Army Training Command helps V Corps record VICTORY STRIKE III

By Sgt. Vincent M. Picard  
207th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

DRAWSKOPOMORSKIE TRAINING AREA, Poland — The Deployable Operations Group, part of the 7th Army Training Command in Grafenwoehr, Germany, does what few other units in the Army can — bring the battlefield into the classroom.

In the past, only big-time training centers, like the Combat Maneuver Training Center at Hohenfels, Germany or the National Training Center at Fort Irwin, Calif., had the technical sophistication to track everything in an exercise — down to an individual soldier — moving on a battlefield and record what happens.

Not any more.

“We have a portable system that simulates a combat training center just about anywhere,” said Staff Sgt. Cedric Warner, DOG armor sergeant. “We can give them live, constructive, virtual data, and can instantly provide an after-action review that goes anywhere.”

Some of the information collected by DOG systems includes position, battle damage assessment and firing direction.

The group is currently in Poland supporting Victory Strike III, a V Corps exercise focused on corps-level deep strike operations. In effect, the DOG is “recording” the exercise.

Delivering that product isn’t easy in an exercise involving more than 5,000 U.S. and Polish soldiers and airmen, spread out over several training areas in western Poland. To capture the action of an exercise, the group has a total of four systems available to conduct instrumented training experiences. Although a smaller exercise may require only one system, Victory Strike III has all four linked together to cover the massive simulated battles.

There are more than enough harness systems and Multiple Integrated Laser Engagement System modification kits to cover almost every piece of equipment used in Victory Strike — including some of the nonmilitary rental vans. A crew of about 70 people, a mix of active duty soldiers, DoD civilian employees and contractors, puts together and

runs a complex system using two different systems — one tracking individual pieces of ground equipment and the other aviation and air defense artillery assets.

“We tailor our services to fit the size of the exercise,” said Warner. “Usually, we are only called for brigade-sized events or higher, but we could do this for a single platoon or even a squad.”

“As word about our success in providing quality training experiences spreads, we are getting called on to do bigger and bigger events,” he said. “However, we only support deploying units.”

Following Victory Strike III, the group will provide the V Corps staff with a complete training product, including custom after-action review packages that provide detailed information about every battle waged.



Photo by Sgt. Vincent Picard  
Saab Training Systems Program Manager Stephan Larsson pounds in a stake to anchor down a Distance Acquisition Network antenna.



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# Perfecting rescue techniques

**By Sgt. 1st Class Jeffrey Mullett**  
207th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

MIROSLAWIEC AIR BASE, Poland — “Two Minutes!,” yells Pvt. 2 Clifford Martin of F Troop, 1st Cavalry Regiment, 1st Brigade Reconnaissance Troop, 1st Armored Division, over the roar of the UH-60 Black Hawk’s rotors. The helicopter drops down to just above the treetops.

“One minute!,” he yells, as the three Black Hawks approach a small field in an unpopulated area about 30 minutes from Miroslawiec Air Base.

In no time at all the Black Hawk, flown by Chief Warrant Officers 2 Gordon “Gordo” Cimoli and William “Billy” Kilgore of V Corps’ C Company, 5th Battalion, 158th Aviation, sweeps in to a near-perfect landing.

The door flies open as Sgt. 1st Class Daniel Pinion, Pfc. Jeremy Hornack and Pvt. 2 Martin of F Troop pile out to look for a pilot they were told was shot down here. After a quick search he is found lying nearby.

In less than five minutes the members of F Troop rush out of the Black Hawk, locate the “downed pilot,” Chief Warrant Officer

2, Shaun Cusic of B Company, 3/158th, and are back inside and airborne.

The members of “Charlie Company” and F Troop swept through this search and rescue drill that is part of the joint V Corps-Polish forces exercise Victory Strike III in short order. But what they learn in this quick drill will be long lasting, and help establish a procedure that has not existed before.

“We are establishing a doctrine here...we’ve never done this before,” says C Company, 5/158th’s 1st Sgt. Scott Bailey.

In the past, the U.S. Air Force has handled most of these combat search and rescue missions for American ground force. The Army has the capability to handle CSAR missions. And exercises are just the first step in being able to make it happen.

F Troop’s cavalry scouts say a rapid mission like this is just another day for them, but the members of the aviation companies in this exercise tell a different story.

Black Hawk flight crews have a large amount of work to do prior to conducting a mission like this. Pre-flight preparations can

take a very long time, and if there is anything wrong with the aircraft, they need to be able to fix it at a moment’s notice.

“Sometimes it gets ugly,” says crew chief Spc. Robert Howell of Charlie 5/158th.

“How old is your car?” asks Bailey, “...some of these birds are from 1984.” The crew chiefs constantly work late into the night to make sure the Blackhawks are ready for the next day’s missions.



**A crew chief signals a Black Hawk helicopter from V Corps’ C Company, 5th Battalion, 158th Aviation Regiment, 12th Aviation Brigade, for takeoff.**

## DECON, cont.

pated in a thorough decon at Fort Riley, Kansas, but that he still had to work to recall some NBC training skills he hadn’t used in nearly 10 years.

“If you don’t use em’, you loose em,’” said Gibson. “This was a good refresher.”

“Refreshing” may be the more appropriate word. For many of the soldiers, the exercise was the first opportunity to take a good shower since arriving in Poland for Victory Strike.

“The shower was a nice way to end the day,” said Mastick. “We should have to do a thorough decon after every day’s training.”



**Photo by Spc. Kris Steward**  
Leszek Lejchmic, a member of the Polish decontamination team, hoses down a U.S. Army HEMTT driven by soldiers of A Battery, 1st Battalion, 27th Field Artillery, during a joint Polish-American decontamination exercise.

*Editor’s note: Spc. Kris Steward is assigned to 69th Air Defense Artillery Brigade, Public Affairs Office.*



**Photos by Sgt. 1st Class Jeffery Mullett**

**Sgt. 1st Class. Daniel Pinion of V Corps’ F Troop, 1st Cavalry Regiment, 1st Brigade Reconnaissance Troop, 1st Armored Division, helps the “wounded pilot,” Chief Warrant Officer 2 Shaun Cusic of B Company, 3rd Battalion, 158th Aviation, into a Black Hawk helicopter during a combat search and rescue training exercise.**

## Sports

### MLB:

The Twins just keep winning. Joe Mays gave up one earned run on four hits during his 8 innings in Game 1 as Minnesota beat Anaheim 2-1 and jumped out to a one game lead in the American League Championship Series. Ramon Ortiz hoped to even things up last night against Rick Reed and the Twins. San Francisco's Kirk Rueter faced Matt Morris and the Cardinals in Game 1 of the NLCS last night.

### NFL:

After week 5 the Raiders stand as the league's only undefeated team...Emmit Smith is less than 300 yards away from the all-time rushing title...and the Redskins appear to have finally found their quarterback after rookie Patrick Ramsey's 20-34, 268 yard performance Sunday against the Titans.

### NBA:

A Houston, Tx., television station reports that the Rockets have orally agreed to a three-year contract with 7-foot-5 import center Yao Ming for \$18 million. The Chinese Basketball Association, who must approve the deal, said it is address the matter after Yao finishes playing for China in the Asian Games which conclude Friday...And the Knicks have fined NBA bad boy Latrell Sprewell \$250,000 after he failed to notify the team that he had broken his hand.

## Weather

Today: Partly cloudy skies with morning fog and isolated afternoon rain showers, winds will be out of the northeast at 5 knots. High: 52F Low: 36F

Tomorrow: Mostly cloudy skies with morning fog winds will be northeast east 10-15 knots with gusts to 25 knots. High: 54F Low: 32F

(Weather provided by V CORPS USAF Weather Team)

# Information Roundup

## Safety Is Important to Soldiers

■ **Use the buddy system.** This old standby puts the soldier who really knows what he or she is doing on a task with the one who is new. Make your soldiers feel responsible for each other. Watching out for someone's safety somehow makes us more aware of potential danger than just watching out for number one, and it prepares newer soldiers to be safety-conscious leaders.

■ **Don't let your soldier be careless.** Believe it or not, many injuries occur while we're having fun. Having a successful and safe training experience, then getting hurt horse-playing around afterward is stupid. Don't let your "guard" down while you and your soldiers are having fun.

■ **Speak up.** Have you been waiting for someone to give you the authority to take charge regarding the safety of your soldiers? Go for it. If you think an act is unsafe, question it. If you know it is unsafe, stop it. Your soldiers will never forget you; nor will they forget the message that you're sending—that *safety is important to soldiers*.

## Back on home ground



Photo by Spc. Claudia Baltodano

Spc. Krzysztof Sobiesiak, petroleum supply specialist with Headquarters Headquarters Troop, 2nd Squadron, 6th U.S. Cavalry, talks with a group of local children. Sobiesiak is from Boston, Mass., yet was born and raised in Poland and is currently serving as a translator during VSIII.